

Hot Environments

Exposure to extreme heat can result in illness and injury. Working in a hot environment can cause heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, or heat rash. In addition, heat increases the risk of injury for workers because of sweaty palms, fogged-up safety glasses, and dizziness. Burns also can occur when a worker comes in contact with a hot surface or steam.

Ben's Story

Ben had been outside for several hours in extremely hot temperatures laying brick. He began to feel nauseated, his head ached, and he was sweating heavily. His supervisor noticed Ben was working much slower than usual and asked him how he felt. When he heard the symptoms, he called 911, took Ben to the shade, gave him a cool drink, and wetted him with cool water and ice.

✘ Have you or someone you know ever experienced a heat-related illness on the job? If so, what happened?

✘ What can you do to help avoid heat-related illnesses?

Remember This

- Your employers should train you on heat hazards and their plan to prevent heat-related illnesses.

- Take frequent breaks in the shade or in air conditioning.
- Drink plenty of water – stay hydrated. During moderate work in the heat for less than 2 hours, you should drink 1 cup (8 ounces) of water every 15–20 minutes. If you will be sweating for several hours, you will need sports drinks. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and sugar.

Recognize the signs of heat illnesses in yourself and your co-workers:

- *Signs of heat stroke include*
 - confusion
 - slurred speech
 - seizures
 - hot, dry skin or profuse sweating
 - unconsciousness
 - high body temperature
- *Signs of heat exhaustion include*
 - headache
 - nausea
 - dizziness
 - weakness
 - irritability
 - thirst
 - heavy sweating
 - high body temperature
 - low urine output
- If a co-worker has signs of heat exhaustion: **Call 911.** Get the worker to shade and cool them down by removing clothing, wetting with cool water and ice, and fanning. Encourage frequent sips of water.

How can we stay safe today?

What will we do at the worksite to prevent heat-related illnesses?

1. _____

2. _____

OSHA Regulation: General Duty Clause Section 5(a)(1)

Hot Environments



- ✘ Recognize the signs of heat-related illnesses. **Call 911** if a co-worker has signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Move the worker to the shade, help them cool down, and encourage them to drink water or a sports drink.
- ✘ Drink 1 cup (8 ounces) of water every 15–20 minutes.
- ✘ Take frequent breaks out of the sun.